



Illustration by Jeanne R. Janish,
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CERCOCARPUS MONTANUS VAR GLABER
BIRCHLEAF MOUNTAIN-MAHOGANY

Birchleaf Mountain-mahogany is a shrub that is up to 2 m tall and has smooth, gray or brown bark. The alternate, spoon-shaped leaves, 1-3 cm long, have short petioles, serrated margins on the upper half, and blunt tips. They are dark green and glabrous above but pale and often sparsely hairy beneath. 1-3 flowers are borne on short stalks near the tips of short side branches. The flowers lack petals and consist only of a hairy calyx formed of a tube with 5 reflexed lobes that is 3-6 mm long in bloom but up to 14 mm long in fruit. There are 25-40 stamens. The hairy seeds are up to 12 mm long with tails that are 3-6 cm long. Flowering in early May.

The toothed leaves without an incurved margin distinguish this species from the common *CERCOCARPUS LEDIFOLIUS*. The long, plumose fruits distinguish it from all other genera in our area.